

I am a rancher from Livermore, CA and President of the California Cattlemen's Assoc. We are here today to advocate conserving the Chimeneas Ranch through a conservation easement and strongly oppose fee title ownership by California Department Fish & Game.

Public ownership of this ranch is directly contrary to the extreme fiscal crisis in California. An easement would save approximately \$4 million in acquisition costs and save DF&G annual maintenance, operation and administration costs.

The Cattlemen's Assoc has been told repeatedly by DF&G that it does not have the budget to manage the 1 million plus acres it already owns and that it will not have such funds in the foreseeable future. So, with additional severe cuts looming, why should the Department request additional funds to buy even more land that by its own admission it cannot afford to manage.

The Cattlemen's Association requests that DF&G provide us today their annualized budgeted costs for this ranch, then explain what is the source of these funds. Surely this information is readily available given the proposed \$8.1 million dollar expenditure of public funds on a fee purchase of land.

I would also point out that this ranch has the resources DF&G so covets because it has been a working cattle ranch for over 150 years. No